

Stephen L. Nass

Wisconsin State Senator

PRESS STATEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Governor Walker Leads Again – No Tax Increase Transportation Budget

Senator Steve Nass (R-Whitewater) praised Governor Scott Walker for proposing a responsible 2017-19 Transportation Budget that prioritizes repairing state and local roads, utilizes a sustainable level of bonding and doesn't increase taxes or the vehicle registration fee.

"Governor Walker has kept his word by proposing a reasonable transportation budget that sets the right priorities and doesn't increase taxes or the registration fee. He has provided an option that prioritizes the taxpayers' ability to pay over the demands of special interests for massive new levels of government spending."

Governor Walker and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation provided the following summary of their proposal:

2017-19 Transportation Budget Proposal Highlights

-More transportation funding for all levels of local government. Local governments will receive a \$65 million increase in aid. This is the largest year-to-year change in local aids since 1999-2000, including a 25% increase in the Local Road Improvement Program, and a 30% increase in the Local Bridge Program. This proposal will provide more than \$672 million in general transportation aids for our municipalities and \$212 million for our counties, increases of 4.7% and 8.1%, respectively. The rate per mile for our towns will increase from \$2,202 to \$2,290, or by 4%.

-No tax or fee increases. For decades, Wisconsin's gas tax has been among the highest in the nation and is currently among the top 10 states in the nation for the highest gas excise tax. Governor Walker made it clear in the 2014 campaign that he would not support a tax or fee increase without a corresponding decrease in other state taxes.

-\$1.7 billion in funding for the State Highway Rehabilitation Program. This would be the largest level of funding for the program in history.

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11th Senate District

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-Commitment to traffic safety and maintenance. \$605 million in total funding is proposed for county and statewide efforts to maintain our roads and improve safety. This is a \$69.7 million increase over the last budget and a 39% increase over Governor Doyle's last transportation budget. This funding is directed toward pavement preservation, new signs, lighting, and other measures.

-The lowest level of borrowing since the 2001 – 2003 state budget. This budget will include \$500 million in bonding for the Department of Transportation, which is a significant 41% reduction in borrowing from the last budget and it maintains the state's responsible long-term debt level. According to a recent Pew Charitable Trusts study, Wisconsin's total long-term obligations are fourth lowest in the nation. Even taking this bonding into account going forward, debt service levels will remain in line with recommendations from the Transportation Finance and Policy Commission.

-Commitment to long-term major projects. This budget includes more than \$560 million in funding for major projects. This includes keeping Interstate 39/90 and Highway 10/441 on track while investing nearly \$20 million in STH 15 and \$25 million in 18/151 Verona Road. We will also provide \$122 million for southeastern Wisconsin mega projects completing the Zoo Interchange core, as well as, enumerating and beginning work on the I94 East-West corridor.

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